

REMARKS

The final Office action mailed September 19, 2008, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Claims 1-16 are pending and stand rejected.

The Office action rejected claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on U.S. Patent 7,143,435 (Droms et al., hereinafter "Droms"), U.S. Patent 5,884,024 (Lim et al., hereinafter "Lim") and U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2003/0005047 (Seki et al., hereinafter "Seki"). Applicants respectfully traverse. Even if a person of ordinary skill would have had reason to combine teachings of Droms, Lim and Seki, which Applicants do not concede, the combination would not teach all features of the independent claims.

Claim 1 is directed to a method in which a DHCP relay is used to modify the protocol field in the DHCP messages so as to control the interaction between the DHCP server and the DHCP client. The Office action admits at page 3 that Droms and Lim fail to teach the following features of claim 1:

wherein modifying the one or more protocol fields includes:

upon receiving a DHCP message for request sent from the DHCP client to the DHCP server, filling in at least one field associated with the DHCP relay in the DHCP message for request, and

upon receiving a DHCP message for response sent from the DHCP server to the DHCP client, replacing at least one server parameter of a field associated with the DHCP server in the DHCP message for response with at least one relay parameter of the DHCP relay.

The Office action then asserts that these features are taught by Seki. However, the teachings of Seki do not relate to DHCP messages. Instead, Seki describes a data transfer method using a caching technique and/or a compression technique to reduce network load between data transfer devices. A server side proxy 30 replaces the reply data of a reply message received from a server 20 with a corresponding "fingerprint" registered in a fingerprint cache 34, and transfers the resulting reply message to the client side proxy 40. The purpose of the technique described in Seki is to reduce network load by transferring a fingerprint instead of actual data; the fingerprint is replaced with the actual data at the client side proxy. No part of Seki suggests that the data replaced with a fingerprint is data within a DHCP message. Even if some part of a message in Droms or Lim was replaced with a fingerprint, there is nothing to

suggest (and the Office has not explained why) the replaced portion would be a server parameter field associated with a DHCP server. Accordingly, Seki fails to teach “upon receiving a DHCP message for request sent from the DHCP client to the DHCP server, filling in at least one field associated with the DHCP relay in the DHCP message for request” and similarly fails to teach “upon receiving a DHCP message for response sent from the DHCP server to the DHCP client, replacing at least one server parameter of a field associated with the DHCP server in the DHCP message for response with at least one relay parameter of the DHCP relay.”

Moreover, a person of ordinary skill would not have had reason to combine teachings of Droms and Lim with teachings from Seki. As justification for the combination, the Office action asserts that “it would have been obvious ... to modify or incorporate Seki’s teachings of replacing data in messages from a server with Droms-Lim’s [sic] to provide for a more efficient messaging system.” The Office has not explained how such a combination would increase efficiency. For example, the Office has not explained how utilization of Seki’s method of replacing data with a “fingerprint” at one server and then replacing the fingerprint with the actual data at another server will make communications more efficient. If anything, it would seem that combination of Seki with Droms would *decrease* efficiency. For example, Droms describes a DHCP relay sending a RADIUS authentication result of an original physical port access request of a DHCP client’s host to a DHCP server for the authentication and address assignment process by means of DHCP information. The function of the DHCP relay is to carry the RADIUS authentication result message by forwarding the DHCP Message between the DHCP client and the DHCP server. It is not clear how replacing some portion of the forwarded DHCP Message with a “fingerprint” of the replaced portion would improve efficiency.

For at least the above reasons, claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and are thus allowable for the same reasons as claim 1, and because of additional recited features. For example, claims 4 recites “wherein for a DHCPDISCOVER or DHCPREQUEST message sent from the DHCP client to the DHCP server, the DHCP relay fills in the at least one field associated with the DHCP relay with a value so that a DHCP OFFER, DHCPACK or DHCPNAK response from the DHCP server to the DHCP client can be sent to the DHCP relay.” The Office action asserts at page 6 that Lim teaches this feature at Figures 5 and 6 and in the Abstract. In Lim, the DHCP relay embeds a trusted identifier in the DHCPREQUEST message and the

DHCP server controls the number of the IP addresses which could be allocated according to the trusted identifier. This is different from claim 4, which recites filling in a field value so as to cause certain specified messages to be sent to the DHCP relay. Lim does not indicate that the inclusion of a trusted identifier causes one of the message types recited by claim 4 to be sent to the DHCP relay. For example, it is not clear from Lim that omitting the trusted identifier would cause one of the specified messages to go somewhere other than a DHCP relay.

Independent claim 9 recites a DHCP relay configured to perform operations similar to steps recited in claim 1, and is thus allowable for the same reasons as claim 1. Claims 10-13 depend from claim 9 and are thus allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 9.

Independent claim 14 recites features similar to those discussed above in connection with claim 1, and is thus allowable for the same reasons as claim 1. Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 9 and are thus allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 9.

All rejections having been fully addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully solicit prompt notification of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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